

# Waiting, Watching, Wondering

10 December

*An Advent to Epiphany Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney*



*Tree on a River Bank (16<sup>th</sup> century, attributed to India, Painted on Cotton, from the Metropolitan Art Museum, New York)*

## *Psalm 1*

- <sup>1</sup>Happy are those  
    who do not follow the advice of the wicked,  
or take the path that sinners tread,  
    or sit in the seat of scoffers;  
<sup>2</sup>but their delight is in the law of the LORD,  
    and on his law they meditate day and night.  
<sup>3</sup>They are like trees  
    planted by streams of water,  
which yield their fruit in its season,  
    and their leaves do not wither.  
In all that they do, they prosper.  
<sup>4</sup>The wicked are not so,  
    but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
<sup>5</sup>Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
    nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
<sup>6</sup>for the LORD watches over the way of the righteous,  
    but the way of the wicked will perish.



### *To ponder*

Today's Psalm tells us that those who take joy or pleasure (delight) in God will be like trees planted by water who grow fruit in the season and do not die between fruitful seasons. In Advent it can seem like we're surrounded by trees between their fruitful seasons, bare branches, no greenery, the skeleton and foundation of the trunk exposed. However, there is the promise that as the seasons turn green shoots and new life and new fruit will prosper. The tree in our Psalm is still nourished by the streams of water in seasons that are both full of fruit and those that are not.

Take some time today to reflect on what spiritual practices help you to take delight in God – perhaps meditating on scripture, singing it, being creative in response to the Word of God. What are the streams of water that allow life to flourish in you during all the Seasons, not just those where we are called to reflect?

### *The Trees by Philip Larkin*

The trees are coming into leaf  
Like something almost being said;  
The recent buds relax and spread,  
Their greenness is a kind of grief.

Is it that they are born again  
And we grow old? No, they die too,  
Their yearly trick of looking new  
Is written down in rings of grain.

Yet still the unresting castles thresh  
In fullgrown thickness every May.  
Last year is dead, they seem to say,  
Begin afresh, afresh, afresh.

### *To listen to*

A Tree & A River (instrumental) by Henry Smith

<https://open.spotify.com/track/7wT9zn4HZgCcz0XadjhU8?si=7f534aca64af44a5>

Jesus Christ the Apple Tree by Elizabeth Poston (performed by the Choir of King's College Cambridge) <https://youtu.be/Cm3fZDZxiko>

